

SPARKLE
By Lorraine Viade, Psy.D.



This weekend, I went to see Whitney Houston's last performance in *Sparkle*, a remake of a movie made in the late 1970s. I didn't see the original, so I can't compare.

This movie was touching on many levels – and even more so for the connection to Whitney Houston and the irony of the messages contained in the story of a single mother (Houston) who is raising three talented girls that struggle against the church and the stage for a place to feel at home. Those who dream of fame and fortune with true talent often risk it all for the glitter and the sparkle without seeing the tarnish that may lie underneath. No one expects to fall victim to violence or to drugs when they are just coming up.

Jordan Sparks in the title role shows why she became an American Idol, but the heart of this film belongs to Whitney who, in a pitch perfect moment, reminds us just who she really was. She sings out her heart and her soul. For those moments, the young Whitney was back.

The acting is fine. No Oscars here, but certainly worth the price of a matinee ticket. If you go see it at the LA Live Regal Cinemas, you can walk down the block and see the sweet tribute to Whitney Houston at the nearby Grammy Museum which I did this weekend.

Everyone has hopes, dreams and desires for what their life should be. When fame hits at a young age, as it did for Whitney and for all those who now follow, there is danger everywhere. From the people you love and from those who love you. Unless you have the approval and security of knowing you are loved by a power greater than yourself, fame will not mean much once you do get it. Fame also will not satisfy that universal need to be accepted by our family exactly as we are. Sometimes we don't feel worthy of success and that undermines everything we worked so hard to achieve.

Sparkle reminds us that dreams can and do come true, but you need to have good roots to grow from and you need to believe in yourself with the unwavering faith that your gifts and talents are there to be shared as God shared them with you.

I give *Sparkle* 3½ couches.

